

PRACTICE OF LAW BOARD
STATE OF WASHINGTON

ADVISORY OPINION NO. 2

PREPARING MINUTES OF A BUSINESS MEETING

QUESTION PRESENTED

May a nonlawyer prepare minutes of a business meeting?

SHORT ANSWER

Yes.

ANALYSIS

[General Rule 24](#) defines the practice of law in Washington. It provides in part:

(a) General Definition: The practice of law is the application of legal principles and judgment with regard to the circumstances or objectives of another entity or person(s) which require the knowledge and skill of a person trained in the law. This includes but is not limited to:

- (1) Giving advice or counsel to others as to their legal rights or the legal rights or responsibilities of others . . .
- (2) Selection, drafting, or completion of legal documents or agreements which affect the legal rights of an entity or person(s).
- (3) Representation of another entity or person(s) in a court, or in a formal administrative adjudicative proceeding or other formal dispute resolution process or in an administrative adjudicative proceeding in which legal pleadings are filed or a record is established as the basis for judicial review.
- (4) Negotiation of legal rights or responsibilities on behalf of another entity or person(s).

Businesses typically hold periodic meetings such as an annual meetings of directors, shareholders, or members. Whether the meeting is formal or informal, minutes are simply a record of what occurred at a meeting.

Preparation of the minutes of a meeting does not require the application of legal principles and judgment or the knowledge and skill of a person trained in the law. Therefore, this activity does not fall within the definition of the practice of law and can be done by nonlawyers.

Advisory opinions are issued by the Practice of Law Board under the authority of the Washington Supreme Court pursuant to [General Rule 25\(c\)\(1\)](#).

This advisory opinion supersedes Advisory Opinion #04-36 issued in January 2006.

(November 8, 2013)